

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ABU DH 01689 01 OF 02 141127Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----050757 141137Z /12

R 140838Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7998
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 ABU DHABI 1689

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TC
SUBJECT: POLITICAL TENSIONS IN UAE

REF: (A) ABU DHABI 1551, (B) AMBASSADOR MEMCON JUNE 1, 1978,
(C) STATE 141246, (D) ABU DHABI A-029 6/7/78 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR CALLED JUNE 13 ON FONMIN SUWAIDI TO
CONVEY TO HIM INSTRUCTIONS RECEIVED FROM DEPARTMENT TO URGE RULERS
TO COMPOSE THEIR INTERNAL DIFFERENCES FOR SAKE OF PRESERVING
THE FEDERATION. SUWAIDI SPOKE AGAIN AT SOME LENGTH ABOUT
MILITARY, FOREIGN AID, AND EVEN JUDICIAL ISSUES DIVIDING
RULERS, PRIMARILY GOING OVER SAME GROUND COVERED IN PRE-
VIOUS MEETING. HE EXPRESSED SOME CONCERN ABOUT PUBLIC
AIRING OF THESE DIFFERENCES BY DUBAI RULER SHAIKH RASHID,
INDICATING THAT HE HAS URGED ZAYID NOT TO RESPOND PUBLICLY.
SUWAIDI READILY CONCURRED AMBASSADOR'S SUGGESTION THAT HE
CALL SOON ON ZAYID TO MAKE POINTS CONTAINED HIS INSTRUCTIONS
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 ABU DH 01689 01 OF 02 141127Z

AOJ URGED HIM TO SEE RASHID AGAIN AS WELL. END SUMMARY

1. ON JUNE 13, I MET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER SUWAIDI TO INFORM
HIM THAT SINCE OUR MEETING OF JUNE 1 (REF B), I HAD RECEIVED
SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS TO MAKE POINTS CONTAINED PARA 2 OF
REF C. AFTER READING POINTS WHICH I HAD ON PLAIN SHEET OF
PAPER, SUWAIDI FELT THIS WAS AN EXCELLENT STATEMENT AND

ASKED ME IF HE COULD HAVE COPY WHICH I PROCEEDED TO GIVE HIM. SUWAIDI THOUGHT I SHOULD MEET WITH UAE PRESIDENT SHAIKH ZAYID AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO REPEAT THESE POINTS TO HIM. HE WAS ALSO INTERESTED TO LEARN THAT USG HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH UK, SAUDI AND IRANIAN GOVERNMENTS TO ASK THAT THEY MAKE SIMILAR REPRESENTATIONS IN SUPPORT OF UAE COHESION (NOTE: THE IRANIAN AMBASSADOR WAS WAITING TO SEE SUWAIDI AFTER MY DEPARTURE).

2. SUWAIDI REVIEWED AGAIN DIFFICULTIES IN GETTING RULERS TO UNDERSTAND ISSUES AFFECTING SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF FEDERATION. ARMED FORCES COULD NOT BE FRAGMENTED WITH EACH EMIRATE HAVING ITS OWN FORCE. NOT ONLY DID THIS PREVENT EFFICIENCIES THAT WOULD PERMIT REDUCTION IN OVERALL SIZE OF ARMED FORCES, WHICH HE WOULD WELCOME, BUT GAVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR UNFRIENDLY ELEMENTS HAVE DIRECT CONTACTS WITH ARMED FORCES OF DIFFERENT EMIRATES AND THUS TO UNDERMINE UAE SECURITY AND STABILITY. HE AGAIN MADE POINT THAT WHO IS TO COMMAND ARMED FORCES AND THEIR CHAIN OF COMMAND ARE DECISIONS WHICH RULERS THEMSELVES MUST WORK OUT BUT WHICH MUST BE WITHIN UNIFIED SYSTEM.

3. SUWAIDI ALSO DISCUSSED AT SOME LENGTH FINANCIAL ISSUES WHICH ARE SOURCE OF CONTENTION AMONG EMIRATES. BOTH HE AND ZAYID HAD BEEN STRONGLY CRITICIZED BY RASHID FOR UAE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM. BOTH HAD TRIED EXPLAIN TO RASHID AND
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 ABU DH 01689 01 OF 02 141127Z

OTHER RULERS UAE CANNOT ASSURE ITS WON PROSPERITY AND SECURITY IF IT REFUSES TO SHARE ITS WEALTH WITH POORER COUNTRIES. THESE COUNTRIES EXPECT HELP FROM THOSE WITH HUGE INCOMES, OTHERWISE THEY COULD TAKE DESPARATE MEASURES. MOREOVER, AS RESPONSIBLE ARAB STATE, UAE ITSELF "CANNOT HESITATE IF SAUDI ARABIA SUPPORTS EGYPT, OR SUDAN OR MAURETANIA." IT MUST PARTICIPATE IN ASSISTANCE ACTIVITIES WHICH WILL IMPROVE STABILITY IN MIDDLE EAST REGION. SUWAIDI SAID RASHID'S RETORT TO THIS CONTINUES TO BE THAT UAE SHOULD GIVE NOTHING AND SHOULD BETTER MANAGE FUNDS IT GETS FROM ITS OIL EXPORTS.

4. IN THIS REGARD, SUWAIDI MADE INTERESTING OBSERVATION THAT WHILE IT WAS TRUE THAT FINANCIAL SYSTEM IN UAE IS NOT PERFECT, ABU DHABI HAS DONE GREAT DEAL TO IMPROVE ACCOUNTABILITY OF USE OF FUNDS. ABU DHABI RULING FAMILY STILL RECEIVES ABOUT 4 PERCENT OF TOTAL INCOME BUT "96 PERCENT GOES TO THE GOVERNMENT AND INTO THE HANDS OF THE PEOPLE." MOREOVER, A PORTION OF WHAT SHAIKH ZAYID RECEIVES IS DISTRIBUTED TO CHARITABLE ENDEAVORS.
IN DUBAI, NO ONE KNOWS EXACTLY HOW
MUCH MONEY IS RECEIVED OR IS ACCOUNTED FOR, SUWAIDI ADDED.

SECRET

NNN

SECRET

PAGE 01 ABU DH 01689 02 OF 02 141159Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----051156 141211Z /41

R 140838Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7999
INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

S E C R E T FINAL SECTION OF 2 ABU DHABI 1689

EXDIS

5. SUWAIDI THEN RAISED ANOTHER PROBLEM REGARDING REFUSAL BY DUBAI AND RAS AL KHAIMAH TO RECOGNIZE THE DECISIONS OF THE UAE SUPREME COURT AS CALLED FOR IN THE 1971 PROVISIONAL CONSTITUTION. THIS WAS ONE OF TEN POINTS THAT ABU DHABI HAD RAISED WHEN THE NOW DEFUNCT CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE HAD MET (REF D). A FEDERATION COULD NOT REALLY OPERATE SATISFACTORILY IF ITS MEMBERS REFUSE TO ACCEPT DECISIONS OF A SUPREME JUDICIAL BODY.

6. SUWAIDI EXPRESSED CONCERN AT WHAT IMPACT MIGHT BE OVER RECENT PUBLICITY GIVEN TO INTER-EMIRATES DISPUTES AS RESULT OF SHAIKH RASHID'S INTERVIEW IN SAWT AL UMMAH (ABU DHABI 1621). ONE GROUP FAVORED BRINGING ISSUE OUT INTO THE OPEN. ANOTHER GROUP FELT IT WAS MISTAKE BECAUSE IT WOULD SHOW TO EVERYONE THAT THERE ARE PETTY BUT SERIOUS DIVISIONS WITHIN UAE WHICH "ENEMIES COULD EXPLOIT". HE SAID SHAIKH ZAYID INITIALLY HAD WANTED TO RESPOND TO POINTS MADE BY SHAIKH RASHID BUT HE (SUWAIDI) HAD CAUTIONED RESTRAINT. (COMMENT:
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 ABU DH 01689 02 OF 02 141159Z

THIS ASSERTION WOULD SEEM TO CAST DOUBT ON INDIAN AMBASSADOR'S STORY THAT INTERVIEW MAY HAVE BEEN ARRANGED BY SUWAIDI HIMSELF). ZAYID HAD AGREED BUT SAID IF RASHID GOES TO PRINT AGAIN, HE WOULD HAVE TO ANSWER. OTHERWISE, THE CITIZENS WOULD THINK THAT DUBAI IS RIGHT AND ABU DHABI IS WRONG. I SUGGESTED THAT NOW MIGHT BE TIME FOR SHAIKH ZAYID TO ISSUE A BROAD GENERAL STATEMENT REAFFIRMING GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF UNION; REVIEWING HISTORY OF HOW UNION WAS CREATED SUCH AS ABU DHABI CESSION OF PIECE OF TERRITORY TO DUBAI IN 1968 TO ASSURE ADHESION; AND SETTING FORTH WHAT ZAYID HOPED UAE MIGHT LOOK LIKE IN NEXT DECADE, AND WHAT IS WAS HOPED FEDERATION WOULD BE ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH FOR ITS PEOPLE IN THAT TIME.

7. SUWAIDI DID NOT COMMENT ON THIS SUGGESTION BUT SAID HE HOPED I WOULD SEE SHAIKH RASHID AGAIN AFTER I HAVE SEEN SHAIKH ZAYID. HE SAID THE PEOPLE ARE LOOKING FOR LEADERSHIP. SOMEHOW, SHAIKH RASHID HAS TO BE URGED TO TAKE ON HIS RESPONSIBILITIES AS NUMBER TWO MAN IN FEDERATION AND NOT JUST RESTRICT HIS ATTENTION TO DUBAI'S INTERESTS AND CRITICIZE FROM THE SIDELINES. OTHERWISE, THE RULERS AND THEIR SONS WILL EVENTUALLY DISCREDIT THEMSELVES IN THE EYES OF THE CITIZENS. "WE DO NOT WANT FRIENDLY COUNTRIES LIKE THE US, UK, SAUDI ARABIA, AND IRAN TO LOSE THEIR CONFIDENCE IN THE UAE. WE DO NOT WANT THE UAE TO BE A WEAK LINK."

8. COMMENT: SUWAIDI'S REMARKS ON THIS OCCATION DID NOT ADD MUCH ON WHAT HE TOLD ME DURING OUR LAST INTERVIEW JUNE 1. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE THIS SECOND CONVERSATION PLUS MY ABILITY THIS TIME TO CONVEY THAT I WAS SPEAKING UNDER INSTRUCTION WILL HELP TO OVERCOME ANY LINGERING DOUBTS HE MIGHT HAVE THAT USG UNSYMPATHETIC OR INDIFFERENT TO SURVIVAL OF UAE AS A SEVEN-EMIRATE FEDERATION. I AM SEEKING APPOINTMENT WITH
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 ABU DH 01689 02 OF 02 141159Z

ZAYID AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO GO OVER SAME POINTS AND WILL THEN ASK AGAIN TO SEE RASHID FOR THIS PURPOSE. MEANTIME, WE GREATLY APPRECIATE STEPS UNDERTAKEN BY EMBASSIES TEHRAN, JIDDA, AND KUWAIT TO STIMULATE THEIR HOSTS ALSO TO WEIGH IN TO SUPPORT DEMARCHES WHICH BRIT AMB ROBERTS AND I ARE MAKING HERE.
DICKMAN

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 14 jun 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ABUDH01689
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780248-0360
Format: TEL
From: ABU DHABI
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780663/aaaacbua.tel
Line Count: 217
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 43b0bc89-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 ABU DHABI 1551, 78 STATE 141246, 78 ABU DHABI A-29
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 28 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2365557
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POLITICAL TENSIONS IN UAE
TAGS: PGOV, PINT, TC
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/43b0bc89-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014